

Pelvics equal to head, 4.4 (4.2-4.6) in standard length; two rays joined at the basal part, the inner ray longer reaching the vent. Caudal truncate, upper and lower rays produced, 4.4 (4.1-4.6) in standard length. Lateral line consists of 3 tubes in front.

Colour in alcohol: Fins hyaline. Body uniform reddish-brown. An oval dark patch on the last three dorsal rays.

Female

Material: 3 ♀♀; 46.0-51.0 mm. in total length; 14-12-1964, Upputeru Canal, Nizampatnam. Coll.: N. V. Subba Rao.

Description: D. XIII+21; A. II+22; P. 13; V. I. 2; C. 16. Height of the body 6.7 (6.4-7.2) in total length, 5.8 (5.5-6.2) in standard length. Head length 4.8 (4.6-4.9) in total length, 4.2 (4.0-4.4) in standard length. The body width 1.6 (1.4-1.7) in height of the body, 9.2 (8.8-9.8) in standard length. Eye 1.3 (1.2-1.3) in snout, 1.9 (1.8-2.0) in postorbital part, 3.4 (3.3-3.5) in head length. Snout sloping, 2.5 (2.5-2.6) in head length. Interorbital space concave, 4.4 (4.0-5.0) in head length. Pectoral rounded nearly equal 1.0 (1.0-1.1) to pelvics, 1.3 (1.3-1.4) in head length. Pelvics shorter than head, the inner ray not reaching the vent, 5.0 (4.9-5.2) in standard length. Caudal truncate, upper and lower rays not produced, 5.0 (4.9-5.1) in standard length. Lateral line consists of 2-3 tubes in front. Colour in alcohol as in male without an oval dark patch on the last three dorsal rays.

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K. V. RAMA RAO

17. MULLET'S ON ROD AND LINE IN CHILKA LAKE

Rod and line fishing is becoming popular in Chilka Lake in recent years. Anglers, other than professional fishermen, take to this in autumn and winter months. The angling is not sport-motivated, but a means to add to their rations in addition to getting some hard

cash. A number of boats with men comfortably seated with rod and line take position in a line along the western shores of the lake between Borodi and Jattia and also dot the lake and the outer channel.

Grey mullets are notoriously wary and infinitely cautious and have a reputation of nosing one's 'rag' or other bait and yet going unhooked. But in Chilka Lake this is not true of *Liza macrolepis* known locally as *Dangla*. The angler uses a thin bamboo rod of 3.5 metres, a line (of nylon gut) of 5 metres, a float, a light sinker and round bent hook of numbers 14/15 and 18/19. His bait is green algae, chiefly of *Spirogyra*. In addition he liberally mixes this algae with mud and splashes it in an arc. Rod and line fishing for mullet is similar to that described for *Crenidens crenidens*¹. The algal bait appears to be very attractive for *Dangla* and they are caught in large numbers. As soon as the fish is hooked, the angler deftly drags it towards the boat and keeping the fish just under water hauls it out with a hand net. During our observations in 1964 we found *Dangla* in the size range 308-482 mm. occurring in rod and line catches in September and October (Table). Sizes in the range 360-439 mm. predominate in catches. Weights range from 263-923 gm.

TABLE
SIZES OF *L. macrolepis* OCCURRING IN ROD AND LINE CATCHES

Length (mm.)	Frequency (nos.)	Average wt. (calculated) of fish under each length (gm.)
300-319	5	263
320-339	4	312
340-359	9	367
360-379	21	427
380-399	14	494
400-419	12	566
420-439	23	646
440-459	11	732
460-479	1	824
480-499	1	923

Observations made in Chilka Lake indicate that *L. macrolepis* favours algae and this item takes a predominant place in its natural diet unlike *Mugil cephalus* which prefers decaying organic matter. This perhaps explains why *L. macrolepis* is attracted to algal bait

¹ Natarajan, A. V. & Shah, K. L. (1963): A new element in the commercial fishery of Chilka Lake. *Sci. and Cult.* 29: 513-514.

while *M. cephalus* shuns it though both of them abound in the lake in autumn/winter months when they form a good fishery.

CENTRAL INLAND FISHERIES
RESEARCH INSTITUTE,
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A. V. NATARAJAN
B. K. BANERJI

18. THE COCONUT CRAB *BIRGUS LATRO* (L.)
(CRUSTACEA: PAGURIDAE) IN THE GREAT
NICOBAR ISLAND

(With a photograph and four text-figures)

During the expedition to Great Nicobar Island in February-May 1966, one of us (A.D.) had the opportunity to collect, and observe the habits of the well-known Coconut or Robber Crab [*Birgus latro* (L.)], which appeared to be common at Galathea Bay in this island. A number of berried females were also obtained and attempts to hatch the eggs in the camp laboratory were partially successful. The present note is based on the observations on, and collection of, *Birgus latro* from the Great Nicobar Island.

MATERIAL

In addition to the specimens dissected in the camp laboratory, the following preserved specimens were brought back to Calcutta for confirming the identification. Measurements are given in millimetres.

1. One female with eggs from Stn. No. 6, Galathea Bay, Great Nicobar Island. Collection No. 469. Date 20-3-1966.
Carapace (Cephalothorax) length—115 (Cephalic region 62, Thoracic region 53).
Carapace breadth—124.
2. One female from Stn. No. 7, on way to Pygmalion Point from Galathea Bay, Great Nicobar Island. Collection No. 531. Date 22-3-1966.
Carapace (Cephalothorax) length—138 (Cephalic region 71, Thoracic region 67).
Carapace breadth—144.
3. One female with eggs from Stn. No. 6, Galathea Bay, Great Nicobar Island. Collection No. 628. Date 25-3-1966.
Carapace (Cephalothorax) length—99.5 (Cephalic region 53.5, Thoracic region 46.0).
Carapace breadth—110.